



## City of Cleveland: Public Safety Testing RFP Q&A

February 25, 2016

### General RFP-Related Questions

1. **Q: What is the core focus of the RFP (entry-level testing, background investigations, promotional testing, etc.)?**

A: The core focus of the RFP is to receive vendors' responses regarding Public Safety entry-level testing services for Police and Fire. The City is also interested in receiving responses regarding Promotional testing services and Background Investigation services, although both of these are optional.

2. **Q: Depending on when answers are furnished to Proposers, would the City consider extending the time to respond to this RFP?**

A: The RFP timeline is not expected to be modified.

3. **Q: What are the contract terms (e.g., 1 year with renewal options, 2 years with renewal options, etc.)?**

A: The City will need to work with the Law department to obtain the contract terms for this type of service. In the past, the City has contracted for test consulting services on a per-examination basis. Using a continuous testing model for testing services it would be fair to expect at least a 1 year term.

4. **Q: Is there a copy of the City's Terms and Conditions which the vendor may review?**

A: Required contract terms and conditions would be provided upon reward. The City will attempt to provide a general description of these from the Law Department and will post it to the RFP site when it becomes available.

5. **Q: What is the City's RFP calendar?**

A: Before a timeline can be determined, the City must first receive all RFP responses.

6. **Q: As the City of Cleveland is interested in accepting applications from prospective candidates outside of Cleveland and Ohio, would candidates be able to obtain a certificate of successful completion from public safety physical agility test centers located outside Cleveland and Ohio?**

A: Yes, provided they are done using the specified standards for testing.

7. **Q: Will the city consider the combination of a large-scale, event-based administration (as has been done in the past), in conjunction with individual computer-based administrations?**

A: A combination of testing formats for a test cycle can be proposed and would be evaluated along with the other terms and conditions of the proposer's response to the RFP.

8. **Q: How much did the City pay for the last contract for all of the services requested in the RFP? If the services in the RFP were paid separately, and not as a lump sum, how much did the City pay for the following:**

- Entry Level Testing?



- **Promotional Exam Testing?**

A: The consultant services for previous entry level and promotional examinations were separately contracted for. The entry level examinations were approximately \$75,000 each, and the promotional examinations were approximately \$400,000 each. Please note: (i) because we anticipate that means and methods of conducting the entrance examinations will change based on this RFP, the contract amounts may not be comparable; and (ii) the majority of costs under the promotional examination contracts related to the travel, housing and meal expenses for the assessors.

**9. Q: Who was the last company to provide the City with the services proposed in the RFP and what is their location?**

A: EB Jacobs, LLC, from State College, Pennsylvania.

**10. Q: Does the City have any security concerns that would require all candidates to go through the assessment center exercises in one day?**

A: No. The City requires that all candidates sign a non-disclosure agreement before the testing process begins.

**11. Q: Under Section Titled "Functional Requirements" p. 4, item #3b refers to providing testing options for candidates within 24 hours registering. Is the City asking that the vendor provide candidates with testing options as they register (not necessarily a test date/time availability within 24 hours of registration), or does the vendor need to provide testing date and time options for candidates to be able to test within 24 hours of registering?**

A: The City is not requiring that candidates be tested within 24 hours of registering, only that candidates be able to receive or select testing options in that timeframe.

## Entry-level Exams

**12. Q: What is the volume of entry-level testing for Police and Fire?**

A: Historically when the City of Cleveland established an eligible list for hiring, the list was good for two years and then it expired. Generally, the City gets at least 2000 or more applicants for each of the Police and Fire entrance examinations, for a total of 4000 applicants. This has reached as high as 5000 total applicants.

**NOTE:** Not all applicants appear on test day. The vendor should expect to receive at least this test volume maybe more. On an annualized basis and with multiple tests in a year this number will be higher.

**13. Q: For the entry-level testing, does the City want a full job analysis for each occupation? Or would the City prefer a transportability study?**

A: The proposers are being asked to provide an examination and examination process which will accomplish the objectives in the RFP, while also providing a valid and validated, defensible basis for the evaluation and ranking of public safety candidates. A job analysis is preferable; if a transportability study is proposed as an alternative the proposal would have to be clear as to the content and nature of that study as well as any cost impact of such a study as an alternative to a job analysis.



**14. Q: Will the City be providing a reading list for the entry-level exams?**

A: Typically, the City has made available a consultant provided study guide with some sample questions, but does not provide a reading list.

**15. Q: For the entry-level exams, is the City is expecting that all four exams would be administered at the same time or would it be staggered?**

A: Generally, the City does not administer all entry-level tests at the same time although it is possible that the City would be testing for multiple tests (more than one) at the same time.

**16. Q: Will the vendor be responsible for the written administration of the exam?**

A: The City is looking for the vendor to provide all examination and administration services.

**17. Q: Is the vendor expected to provide monitors for the exams as well?**

A: Yes. The expectation is that the vendor will provide end-to-end services for all Public Safety entry-level exams for Police and Fire including, but not limited to, the testing facility, equipment required for the exams, exam content, exam administration, exam security, and exam proctoring.

**18. Q: Is there a preference for an off-the-shelf or custom developed test?**

A: The City does not have a strong preference for either with respect to entry-level testing, but we expected some variation to ensure testing security and to discourage the occurrence of professional test takers.

**19. Q: What is meant by open-ended?**

A: Open-ended in the RFP refers to soft skills instead of hard knowledge on a defined set of materials.

**20. Q: What is meant by “video capability for testing”?**

A: “Video capability for testing” refers to incorporating video simulations and/or scenarios into the entry-level testing process.

**21. Q: Is there an expectation that the entry-level tests will include psychiatric testing?**

A: No. The City is not looking for the vendor to provide psychiatric testing, and it is not a required part of the RFP response.

## Physical Agility

**22. Q: Who currently administers Physical Agility Testing for the City, and what test is currently being used?**

A: The City has utilized Cuyahoga Community College, their staff and their facilities in the past for physical agility testing. Most recently, physical agility testing has been done at City owned facilities utilizing City personnel to administer them. The content of those tests can be found in the following documents provided as addendums to the RFP: ‘Police Physical Agility Testing.pdf’, ‘Physical Agility Test Standards - Firefighter.pdf’



**23. Q: Does the City have a facility for conducting the Physical Agility exams? Or would the vendor be responsible for providing a facility?**

A: The City has limited facilities which can be used to conduct physical agility exams. Those submitting proposals should address that issue in their assumptions and expectations, as well as any contract alternatives/options in its full proposal response.

**24. Q: “Re: III. Functional Requirements, A. Testing for Entry-level Law Enforcement ... , #15: The proposer shall provide information around handling the physical agility testing component for entry-level Public Safety testing.” Is including the Physical Agility test mandatory in order to bid on the Functional Requirements portion of the RFP?**

A: No.

**25. Q: Does the City expect to continue to use the existing Physical Agility test for each of the entry-level tests for Police and Fire?**

A: Police and Fire entrance examinations use the Physical Agility test, and the City can provide a description of what has been done in the past. In the RFP response, the vendor can recommend we continue it, or provide a different type of agility test.

### Assessment & Job Analysis

**26. Q: Will the vendors be working with Department SME(s) for the assessment?**

A: Yes. The vendor should clearly specify in the RFP response what City SMEs are required for the assessment.

**27. Q: When were the last job analyses performed?**

A: The City is researching this and will attempt to provide an update on the RFP site.

**28. Q: Will you make available the last job analyses?**

A: The City expects that any job analyses required will be completed by the successful proposer in conjunction with designing and administering the testing services.

**29. Q: Will it be practical/possible to conduct a criterion-related validation study for incumbent police officers and firefighters? This would involve administering a 3-hour test to approximately 150 incumbents and collecting a tailored performance rating from supervisors for each field-test participant.**

A: This is possible. The City would be looking to the vendor to provide best practices and value proposition for this exercise.

### Promotional Testing

**30. Q: Will Promotional testing be on a continuous testing model?**

A: No. Promotional Testing is not expected to be on a continuous testing model.

**31. Q: Can you clarify the positions that would be involved in testing for fire promotions?**



A: In general, all ranks above that of Firefighter, specifically Lieutenant, Captain, Battalion Chief, Assistant Chief and Chief.

**32. Q: For Promotional exams, is the vendor responsible for providing the audio and video equipment for the assessment?**

A: Yes, any equipment required for any of the testing and/or assessment processes is to be provided by the vendor.

**33. Q: For Promotional Exams, when does the City want to have in-basket and oral exams completed by?**

A: The City does not have a specific time table for Promotional Exams to be completed; however, it is expected that Promotional Exams will be completed in this calendar year.

**34. Q: For Promotional exams, are the in-basket and oral exams administered at the same time?**

A: In past practice, in-basket exercises and oral exams have occurred on the same day. These exercises are typically grouped by rank, and each candidate spends approximately half of one day working through in-basket exercises and the oral exams. Generally, if there is a high volume of candidates, the exercises and exams would carry over into multiple days to complete each of them for all the candidates.

**35. Q: Does any component of the Promotional exam serve as a stage gate in which the candidate needs to pass one section in order to proceed to the next section?**

A: Typically, the City administers the written test first and only those that pass the written test progress to the next test. The City does not pause after the in-basket exercises or oral exams to make any determination regarding scoring and continuing on in the process; rather, each candidate will complete all the exercises and the oral exam.

**36. Q: Will the City be providing the facilities for the Promotional testing?**

A: The City can provide the facilities, but each vendor should specify how they manage this process and exactly what is expected from the City.

**37. Q: For the promotional testing, does the City want a full job analysis for each rank? Or is there an existing job analysis?**

A: The RFP indicates that a job analysis will be required.

**38. Q: Over how many days was the previous assessment center conducted, for each rank?**

A: The most recent promotional examinations were conducted for the police department. The tested ranks were Sergeant, Lieutenant and Captain. The assessments for Sergeant took place over 2½ days, those for Lieutenant took 1½ days, and those for Captain took less than one full day. Fire promotional examinations have been comparable.

**39. Q: Is the City willing to conduct development meetings for the promotional exams via webinar/phone conference?**

A: Yes, if the proposer believes that it will be able to obtain all necessary information in that manner.



**40. Q: What is the City's preference for how many questions the written exams for each promotional rank consist of?**

A: The City does not have a specific expectation or preference relating to the number of questions for each written promotional examination.

**41. Q: Does the City want in-person orientations for promotional candidates?**

A: Yes. In the past the orientation has been done prior to (but on the same day as) the assessments.

**42. Q: In Section III.B. "Promotional Testing" on page 7, is the process described for police only? If it is for police promotional process only, what components do you want included in the fire promotional process?**

A: The specific process described is for Police. The Fire promotional process would mirror the police process in most respects, with the exceptions that the ranks are different, and Fire department general orders and procedures are those that would be the subject of testing.

**43. Q: In sections III.B. 7., 8. 9., on page 8, are the number of employees for promotional testing listed for police only, or are those the number of candidates expected for both police and fire combined?**

A: The numbers refer to Police promotional examinations. Fire promotional exam numbers are slightly lower, but with a similar drop off as higher ranks are being tested,

**44. Q: How many panels were used for the previous assessment center(s), for each rank?**

A: During the most recent police promotional examinations, there were four panels (comprised of 3 assessors each) conducting each of the two exercises. Thus, a candidate would appear in front of one panel for the first exercise, then transition to another room and appear before a second panel for the next exercise. The panels were operating concurrently during this process.

## Fee Proposal

**45. Q: Will the City accept other fee structures in addition to what is provided in the RFP?**

A: The City requires the Fee Proposal in the RFP's appendix to first be answered in its entirety to the extent your fee structure is applicable. Other fee schedule formats can be appended to the City's RFP Fee Proposal as additional or optional free structures.

**46. Q: What is the expectation for costs for job candidates?**

A: The City has typically charged \$10 to the applicant at the time of the application to take the exam. We anticipate as part of this process there would be testing center or testing fees to the candidate. The costs to candidates should be spelled out in the Fee Proposal section of the RFP.

**47. Q: What are the initial setup costs?**

A: All costs should be included in each vendor's response in the Fee Proposal. This includes, but is not limited to, any initial assessments recommended, the facility costs, the testing costs, and the candidate costs.



## Single Testing and Continuous Testing Models

48. **Q: Can you please provide clarification for whether or not the vendor should provide feedback on a single testing or/and open continuous model?**

A: The City is interested in the vendor's ability to provide both a single testing and open continuous model.

49. **Q: Is it the City's expectation that the City will do continuous testing but will also continuously rank the eligible list?**

A: Conceptually, the City would have an open applicant period and a periodic times at which the City updates the eligible list (e.g., monthly or quarterly) following each additional exam. This is one of the areas the City will evaluate as part of this process.

50. **Q: Re: "Re: III. Functional Requirements, A. Testing for Entry-level Law Enforcement ... , #4: The Proposer shall provide information addressing if the Public Safety tests are open ended..." Please clarify "open ended."**

A: Open ended refers to the vendor's ability to provide exams to candidates in at any point in time as compared to a preset timeframe (e.g., May 1 - May 15).

51. **Q: Does the city have a specific plan in mind regarding how candidates will be integrated into and selected from a list that is appended with new candidates in the "continuous testing model?". Specifically, has the city considered how frequently the list will be updated and how long a score might be valid before a candidate must retest?**

A: The business process surrounding continuous testing will be one of the key areas addressed during this process. The frequency of list updates for a continuous testing model has not been finalized.

## Assessors

52. **Q: Who will be responsible for recruiting the assessors?**

A: The City's expectation is that the vendor will provide the assessors through whatever network of resources the vendor has. That process of selection, and whether the assessors will be compensated, should be described in the RFP response

53. **Q: Who is responsible for assessor compensation and assessor travel expenses, meals, etc.?**

A: Most assessors are not directly compensated by the consultant, as many assessors perform the job as paid leave through the departments. Travel arrangements would be made by the consultant. Hotel and meal expenses would be pre-approved by the City then submitted for reimbursement. Any anticipated travel expenses should be described and submitted with the proposal.

## Background Investigation Services

54. **Q: Is the City expecting Background Investigation services, Background Investigation processes, either, or both?**

A: The City is interested in receiving responses on either Background Investigation services or recommended processes. Both are ideal, but either will be acceptable.